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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

Question of Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, adopted, without a vote, resolution 47/25 on 25 November 1992, on the question of Western Sahara. The present report, which covers the period from 3 October 1992 to 17 September 1993, is submitted in pursuance of paragraph 6 of that resolution.

2. The Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has continued to exercise his good offices with the parties concerned.

3. In a progress report to the Security Council, 1/ the Secretary-General recalled his appointment of Brigadier-General André Van Baelen (Belgium) to the post of Acting Force Commander, with effect from 1 October 1992. He also recalled that, pending the fulfilment of the conditions necessary for the commencement of the transitional period in accordance with the timetable and plan of action set out in his report of 19 April 1991, 2/ the military mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara remained restricted to monitoring and verifying the cease-fire in effect since 6 September 1991. He was pleased to report that there were no breaches of the cease-fire resulting in casualties on either side and that violations were without exception of a non-violent nature.

4. The Secretary-General further recalled in his report the basic positions of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) regarding the provisions of the settlement plan for Western Sahara. He reported that the opposing points of view of the parties concerning the basic question of the establishment of the electorate largely accounted for their differences. That was made clear in their recent talks with his Special Representative concerning both the interpretation of the criteria and the equally important question of evidence in support of applications for participation in the referendum. 1/

5. Since the outcome of these talks was not conclusive, the Secretary-General suggested that his Special Representative undertake further consultations with a view to clarifying certain unresolved questions and to determining with the parties whether a meeting of tribal chiefs such as that organized by the United Nations at Geneva in June 1990 could contribute to the resolution of the problems impeding the implementation of the settlement plan. 1/

6. In a letter dated 8 October 1992, 3/ the President of the Security Council, on behalf of the members of the Council, welcomed the above suggestions and, thereafter, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General decided, in consultation with the parties, to invite 38 Western Saharan tribal chiefs to a consultative meeting on 30 November and 1 December 1992 at the Palais des Nations at Geneva. The participants, of whom 19 had been designated by the Government of Morocco and 19 by the Frente POLISARIO, were to advise the Special Representative on questions relating to the means of identifying persons authorized to participate in the referendum. 1/

7. However, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, 1/ because of differences relating to the powers of some participants designated by the Moroccan party, the consultative meeting had to be cancelled, despite the compromise proposals put forward by the Special Representative to the delegations of both parties at Geneva.

8. In the light of the above, the Secretary-General observed in his report that, notwithstanding the prior acceptance of the general provisions of the settlement plan, important substantial disagreements persisted between the parties regarding fundamental issues and that, despite intensive efforts exerted by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, it had not been possible to resolve the dilemma that impinged on the very core of the settlement plan. Taking into account those developments, the Secretary-General requested guidance from the Security Council on the following three options:

(a) Continuation and, if possible, intensification of talks;

(b) Immediate implementation of the settlement plan on the basis of the instructions for the review of applications for participation in the referendum appearing in a previous report of the Secretary-General issued in December 1991; 4/

(c) Adoption of an alternative approach not based on the settlement plan.

9. On 10 February 1993, speaking on the question of Western Sahara at the opening session of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Secretary-General stated that Western Sahara continued to be of concern to the international community. In this regard, he was pursuing the work of his predecessor, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. As indicated in the reports that he had regularly submitted to the Security Council, which continued to be seized of the question, he had endeavoured to iron out the difficulties that could hinder the implementation of the settlement plan, which provided for the organization and holding by the United Nations of a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara. He had spoken several times with all the interested parties, and his Special Representative for Western

Sahara had made several trips to the region for the purpose of consultation and dialogue (A/AC.109/PV.1412; see also A/AC.109/1163).

10. On 2 March 1993, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 809 (1993) in which, inter alia, the Council invited the Secretary-General and his special representative to intensify their efforts, with the parties, in order to resolve the issues identified in his report, 1/ in particular those relating to the interpretation and application of the criteria for voter eligibility. The Council invited further the Secretary-General to make the necessary preparations for the organization of the referendum of self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and to consult accordingly with the parties for the purpose of commencing voter registration on a prompt basis starting with the updated lists of the 1974 census. The Council invited also the Secretary-General to report to it as soon as possible and not later than May 1993 on the outcome of his efforts, on the cooperation of the parties and on the prospects and modalities for the holding of the referendum on a free and fair basis with a view that this take place by the end of the current year at the latest.

11. In pursuance of the above resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a further report to the Security Council on 21 May 1993. 5/ The report indicated that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General had travelled to the mission area at the end of March for talks with the parties. Those consultations were essentially aimed at eliciting the views of the parties regarding a possible compromise to bridge existing differences over the interpretation and application of the eligibility criteria enunciated in a previous report of the Secretary-General issued in December 1991. 4/

12. The Special Representative reported that both sides had shown a desire to move towards an early referendum. Some progress had been made in the sense that Morocco had not expressed objections to the main elements of the outline of a proposed compromise and the Frente POLISARIO had, for its part, not rejected the compromise outright, even though it had maintained its earlier reservations about the crucial aspects of the criteria, namely, the testimony in support of the eligibility of applicants to vote. 5/

13. Against that background and in response to the calls from the parties, as well as from several members of the Security Council, the Secretary-General decided to visit the mission area in the first week of June 1993, accompanied by the Special Representative, to make one more effort to seek a compromise solution. 5/

14. Pending that visit, discussions were held with the parties during the months of March and April concerning a number of relevant issues. Both sides confirmed their desire to proceed promptly with the registration of voters and to cooperate with MINURSO in that task. It was also decided to establish an Identification Commission, commencing with a nucleus of about 10 members. 5/

15. In a letter dated 28 May 1993, 6/ the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the latter's interim report on Western Sahara 5/ had been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and that the Council welcomed his decision to visit the region. The members of the Security Council also welcomed the establishment of the

Identification Commission and expressed the hope that it would complete its work as soon as possible.

16. In a report to the Security Council, 7/ the Secretary-General informed the Council that he visited the mission area from 31 May to 4 June 1993, accompanied by his Special Representative. At Rabat the Secretary-General was received by His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco. He also held meetings with the Prime Minister, Mr. Mohamed Karim Lamrani, the Minister of State, Mr. Moulay Ahmed Alaoui, the Minister for State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Abdellatif Filali, and the Minister of the Interior and Information, Mr. Driss Basri, and other senior officials. In the area of Tindouf he met with the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, Mr. Mohammed Abdelaziz. Senior Frente POLISARIO officials were also present. At Algiers he was received by the President of the Haut Comité d'Etat, Mr. Ali Kafi. Meetings were also held with the Head of Government, Mr. Belaid Abdeslam, and other members of the Haut Comité d'Etat, Mr. Redha Malek, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and General Khaled Nazzar, Minister of Defence. While on a subsequent mission at Vienna from 10 to 17 June, he held further consultations with the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, Mr. Ahmed Snoussi, the POLISARIO Coordinator with MINURSO, Mr. Mustafa Bachir Sayed, and the Foreign Minister of Algeria, as well as the Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations, Mr. Mohamedou Ould Mohamed Mahmoud.

17. Additionally, the current Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) were kept regularly informed of ongoing efforts in pursuance of Security Council resolution 809 (1993). Other senior government officials from States members of the Security Council were briefed by the Secretary-General on the Western Sahara question during his visits to Paris and Vienna. 7/

18. As stated in the report, 7/ the aim of the Secretary-General's visit to the mission area was to urge the parties to accept a compromise solution with regard to the interpretation and application of the criteria for voter eligibility. To that effect the Secretary-General presented to the parties a comprehensive text 8/ based on talks with the parties in August and September 1992 and on their comments regarding the outline of a possible compromise which his Special Representative had proposed during a visit to the mission area in March 1993. The Secretary-General invited the parties to convey to him as early as possible their views regarding the acceptability of his compromise proposals, to enable him to submit recommendations to the Security Council in a full report in pursuance of resolution 809 (1993).

19. To follow up the discussions of the Secretary-General with the authorities concerned, his Special Representative held another round of meetings in the mission area from 5 to 20 June 1993. During these and subsequent consultations, both parties reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the peace plan in its entirety and their determination to move towards an early referendum. Both parties stressed that they did not reject the proposed compromise, but expressed reservations on certain provisions of the text. Reservations expressed by the authorities at Rabat centred on specific provisions concerning tribal links with the Territory which, in their view, were unduly restrictive.

In spite of those concerns, Morocco has since acquiesced in the compromise in its present form. 7/

20. For its part the Frente POLISARIO conveyed to the Special Representative its acceptance of all the criteria for voter eligibility enunciated by the former Secretary-General in the annex to his report of 19 December 1991, 4/ thus signifying a favourable change in the earlier position of the Frente POLISARIO which had consistently objected to several of these criteria. With regard to the proposed compromise on the interpretation and application of the criteria for voter eligibility, the Frente POLISARIO also conveyed its acceptance of oral testimony in support of individual applications for participation in the referendum, which indicated another favourable change in its earlier position. However, in expressing substantial reservations on the compromise, the POLISARIO authorities proposed several amendments to the text. Their reservations and proposed amendments concerned primarily provisions relating to tribal links with the Territory and to the composition of the tribal chiefs (shiukhs) invited to testify, which they considered unduly permissive. 7/

21. Noting in his report 7/ that he had consistently sought to encourage direct talks between the parties as a way of facilitating the implementation of the peace plan, the Secretary-General was gratified to learn that, shortly after his visit to the mission area, both parties finally agreed to initiate direct talks in mid-July at Laayoune and to ask for the assistance of the United Nations in holding that meeting. Notwithstanding difficulties in the preparation and organization of the talks and other problems, mostly of a procedural nature, the delegations of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro met from 17 to 19 July 1993 at Laayoune, in the presence of the Special Representative as United Nations observer. While it would have been unrealistic to expect a major breakthrough on substantial issues - nor was this the primary aim of the talks - it was an encouraging sign that this exploratory dialogue was held in a positive spirit, marked by restraint and mutual respect. The Secretary-General reported that neither party had excluded the possibility of resuming the talks for wider discussions on issues of mutual concern. It was his earnest hope that such talks would soon be resumed as a follow-up of the Laayoune initiative.

22. The Secretary-General further reported that Mr. Erik Jensen (Malaysia) was appointed Chairman of the Identification Commission in May 1993 and that the Commission began work on establishing, with the authorities of both parties, the detailed procedures for identification and registration, starting in the Laayoune and Tindouf areas. The Police Commissioner, Colonel Jürgen Friedrich Reimann (Germany), who assumed his functions in May 1993 as Head of the Security Unit of MINURSO, arrived in the mission area with a small contingent of civilian police officers. This first contingent would accompany the registration teams to provide security and order at the various sites for registering voters. 7/

23. At the twenty-ninth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, at Cairo on 28 June 1993, the United Nations Secretary-General made a statement in which, inter alia, he informed the Assembly of his visit to the mission area in the first week of June. He was optimistic that agreement on the terms of reference for the referendum would

soon be reached, and that this would help to generate momentum for the holding of the referendum at an early date. 9/

24. In a letter dated 4 August 1993 addressed to the Secretary-General, 10/ the President of the Security Council informed him that the members of the Council fully supported his efforts to make early progress on the preparations for holding the referendum in accordance with resolution 809 (1993). They welcomed the reaffirmation by the two parties of their commitment to the implementation of the peace plan in its entirety and, in particular, their encouraging responses to his compromise proposal concerning the interpretation and application of the criteria, and their determination to work towards an early referendum. The members of the Council agreed that the holding of direct talks between the two parties in Laayoune from 17 to 19 July 1993 was a positive development and shared the Secretary-General's hope that talks would soon resume.

25. The Secretary-General and his Special Representative are continuing their efforts with the parties, in order to resolve the outstanding issues and to prepare for the holding of the referendum of self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in conformity with Security Council resolutions 658 (1990), 690 (1991) and 809 (1993). In pursuing those efforts the Secretary-General has maintained close contact with the current Chairman of OAU on developments relating to the question of Western Sahara. Since his visit to the mission area, he has also remained in regular contact with the two parties and government officials of the neighbouring countries, either personally or through his senior aides, in order to expedite the implementation of the above resolutions, in particular Council resolution 809 (1993).

26. In his latest report to the Security Council, 7/ the Secretary-General indicated his intention to submit in due course a full report to the Council in pursuance of resolution 809 (1993).

Notes

1/ S/25170.

2/ S/22464 and Corr.1.

3/ S/24645.

4/ S/23299, annex.

5/ S/25818.

6/ S/25861.

7/ S/26185.

8/ Ibid., annex I.

Notes (continued)

9/ A/AC.109/1163, para. 23.

10/ S/26239.

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Item 100 of the provisional agenda*

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 22 September 1993 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, at a meeting in Moscow held on 24 August 1993, the ministers for foreign affairs of the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, adopted the Joint Declaration of the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova on Questions of Environmental Protection (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would take the necessary steps to circulate the attached text of the Declaration as an official document of the General Assembly under item 100 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Y. VORONTSOV

* A/48/150 and Corr.1.

ANNEX

Joint Declaration of the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova on Questions of Environmental Protection

The Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Ukraine, and the Azerbaijani Republic, the Republic of Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, sharing the aspirations of the international community for the ecological recovery of planet Earth, reaffirm their commitment to international cooperation and the efforts of the United Nations in this field and declare their readiness to contribute in every way possible to the development of United Nations activities in the economic, social and environmental fields, to the implementation of the recommendations of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and to the expansion of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The States that have adopted this Declaration share the view that the successful solution of global, regional and subregional problems of sustainable development are dependent on the observance of a balance of interests of all groups of countries, including, of course, countries whose economies are in a period of transition. Such respect for the interests of all concerned, embodied in the documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular the Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biodiversity, is essential if cooperation to promote sustainable development is to be truly international and productive.

The States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, consider it important that the international community and the United Nations and all its bodies and organs should continue to uphold the principle of solidarity and consider their specific needs and capabilities with understanding.

The States that have adopted this Declaration propose that, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, there should be an exchange of views on ways and means of establishing environmental monitoring from outer space as one of the key components in the implementation of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Such an exchange of views would mobilize the experience and potential of the United Nations and make it possible to prepare, within a relatively short period of time, recommendations on practical measures in this area. The States that have adopted this Declaration are prepared to participate in a constructive dialogue on this issue and to contribute to its development.

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Agenda item 121

REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Restructuring and efficiency of the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

1. In pursuance of its resolution 41/213 of 21 December 1988 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations, the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session adopted resolution 44/200 on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213 reiterating that "further implementation of its resolution 41/213 should be carried out in a balanced way and with flexibility, so as to improve, inter alia, the structure and composition of the Secretariat" (para. 6). It further reaffirmed its request to the Secretary-General to "submit to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session an analytical report assessing the effect of the implementation of its resolution 41/213 on the Organization ...".

2. After considering the analytical report of the Secretary-General (A/45/226) on the implementation of resolution 41/213, the General Assembly adopted resolution 45/254, by which it emphasized that "the strengthening of the effectiveness of the Organization is a continuing process ..." and encouraged "the Secretary-General and Member States to pursue the objectives of resolution 41/213, particularly those that have yet to be implemented". Further, the General Assembly decided to "continue considering annually the administrative, structural and other aspects of the improvement of the efficiency of the Organization" and invited the Secretary-General to report to it accordingly.

3. In a subsequent report on this subject (A/46/633), the Secretary-General referred to a number of organizational changes in the economic, social and humanitarian fields and reported on certain measures undertaken in human resources management, conference services, the common procurement system and the impact of technological innovations on the effectiveness of programme delivery by the Secretariat.

4. By its decision 46/467, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General and agreed to keep the matter under review.

5. At its resumed forty-sixth session, by paragraph 3 of its resolution 46/232 on the revitalization of the United Nations Secretariat, the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report on the restructuring of the Secretariat and decided that the "restructuring of the Secretariat is a vital part of the reform and revitalization of the United Nations and should be aimed at, inter alia:

> "(a) Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security and in the area of economic and social development ...",
>
> "(h) Rationalizing the structure of the Secretariat by dividing its major activities along functional lines in a way that would group them into a limited number of consolidated departments to enable more efficient supervision and control by the Secretary-General and to avoid duplication and enhance the coordination and streamlining of the activities in each sector."

6. Further, in the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report covering, inter alia, the programmatic impact and the financial implications of the organizational changes involved in his initiatives.

7. In response to that resolution, the Secretary-General submitted a report containing revised budget estimates on the first phase of the restructuring of the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/2), which was considered by the General Assembly during the first part of its forty-seventh session. The General Assembly took note of these revised estimates.

8. By paragraph 6 of section II of its resolution 47/212 A of 23 December 1992, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the Committee for Programme and Coordination and other concerned intergovernmental bodies with all relevant information that would enable them to identify and analyse the programmatic aspects and consequences of the restructuring of the Secretariat in the areas of their competence and invited them to submit their comments and recommendations to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Further, by the same resolution, the Assembly requested "the Secretary-General to submit an analytical report on all aspects of the restructuring of the Secretariat, including its effects on programme delivery, to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, in the context of the implementation of resolutions 41/213, 42/211, 43/213, 44/200 A to C, 46/232 and the present resolution".

9. At its resumed session, the General Assembly considered a further report of the Secretary-General containing revised budget estimates on the second phase of the restructuring (A/C.5/47/88). By paragraph 1 of its resolution 47/212 B, it approved the revised estimates and by paragraph 12 of the same resolution, the General Assembly reiterated its request contained in paragraph 6 of its resolution 47/212 A (see para. 8 above).

10. In response to the above requests, the Secretary-General is submitting the present report. This report does not seek to constitute a comprehensive statement of all measures; it should be read in conjunction with reports of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/47/1 and A/48/1) 1/ and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

B. Challenges facing the Organization

11. With the end of the cold war, the United Nations has become uniquely placed to pursue the main objectives of the Charter with renewed vigour, namely maintaining international peace and security, securing justice and human rights and promoting social progress and better standards of life in an international milieu characterized by increased freedom.

12. The disappearance of the ideological East-West divide affords hitherto unattainable opportunities to tackle threats to common security. At the same time, however, there is a surge of nationalism and an emphasis on ethnic sovereignty. The cohesion of States is threatened by religious, social, cultural or linguistic strife. The results have often been cataclysmic in many countries. These new dimensions of insecurity have resulted in an increase in

demands on the United Nations to seek and to initiate measures to prevent their escalation into conflicts and to deploy forces, if necessary, with the consent of all parties concerned.

13. The great challenge facing the Organization is to respond effectively to ever-increasing demands and new mandates while at the same time, operating in a constrained budgetary environment. One indication of the increased level of United Nations activities is the number and scope of peace-keeping activities. In the past year alone, peace-keeping operations increased sixfold in troops and costs. These operations have also undergone conceptual and practical changes in response to the many new threats to international peace and security. The mandates of several missions have been extended to responsibilities covering the disarming and demobilization of forces, humanitarian assistance, human rights monitoring, electoral verification and civilian police support. Dealing effectively with the magnitude of the prevailing problems and conflicts necessitates rapid enhancement of the capacity of the United Nations in relation to peace-keeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy.

14. Together with the preservation of international peace and security and economic and social development, the promotion of human rights constitutes one of the three principal objectives of the United Nations that has undergone a great expansion in mandates and activities. In recent years, requests for assistance in the process of democratization and institution-building have multiplied in all parts of the world, particularly in Central and Eastern European countries. In addition to special rapporteurs, experts and working groups, the programme of advisory services and technical cooperation for human rights has become an essential component of the work performed in the promotion and protection of human rights.

15. In recent months, improving the delivery of humanitarian assistance to a growing number of victims of disasters and other emergencies has posed another challenge for the Organization. Since the establishment of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations has been involved in the coordination of humanitarian assistance to over 20 emergency situations. Most of those situations have involved complex internal conflicts. Twenty-two consolidated appeals have been launched, calling for a total of US$ 6 billion in emergency assistance in over 30 countries. A detailed report entitled "Coordination of humanitarian assistance emergency relief and the continuum to rehabilitation and development" was submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/1993/90), putting forward ideas for enhancing the timeliness and effectiveness of humanitarian responses and their continuous transition from relief to rehabilitation and development.

16. As regards development, the gap between the world's rich and poor nations is widening. It is the United Nations task is to impress upon the wealthiest nations that the world cannot ultimately prosper if the poorest continue to suffer and decline.

17. The combined impact of political and economic change on social relations has caused upheaval in many societies. In virtually every country, structural shifts are taking place. Changes in demand and production patterns are moving the balance of economic power away from old centres towards new regions and

countries. No economy, not even the strongest, is wholly within the control of national authorities.

18. Among the main challenges facing the Organization in the period ahead will be promoting an effective follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and to prepare the forthcoming major events: the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit on Social Development.

19. In his annual report on the work of the Organization (A/47/1), the Secretary-General stated that:

> "To meet the new challenges and adapt the Organization to the evolving demands of the times, I have initiated the process of restructuring the Secretariat. My intention is to make the most effective use of resources at my disposal through a rationalization and streamlining of structures and procedures, as well as managerial improvements. A more effective and efficient Secretariat means clearer and more direct lines of responsibility, the capacity to deploy staff and resources where they are most needed, and the ability to respond flexibly to new requests and changing mandates."

20. In his foreword to the report submitted to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in July 1992 (E/1992/82/Add.1), and in his report on the work of the Organization, 1/ the Secretary-General shared his views on the most desirable evolution of United Nations structures and role of the Organization in the economic and social fields, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. He spoke of an "organization capable of maintaining international peace and security, of securing justice and human rights and of promoting, in the words of the preamble to the Charter, 'social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom'".

21. He also made it clear that in a reformed United Nations there would be no order of importance or priority between peace and security and economic and social development. Ensuring lasting peace and alleviating causes of conflicts necessitates the elimination of political oppression, social injustice and blatant economic disparities (E/1992/82/Add.1 and A/47/1).

22. While the expansion of the tasks entrusted to the Organization is a positive sign and represents a high level of confidence in the capacity of the United Nations to meet the needs of the international community, there is a serious imbalance between what is expected from the Organization and the resources available to translate such responsibilities into reality. The financial system of the Organization needs to be enhanced so as to allow an effective and expeditious response to the many challenges confronting it. Otherwise, the very purpose that the world community asks the United Nations to serve may be jeopardized. Delinquent payments by Member States have gravely debilitated the Organization, especially when a proliferation of emergency peace-keeping operations is putting new strains on the budgeting system. As the Secretary-General stated in his Agenda for Peace "Our vision cannot extend to the prospect opening before us as long as our financing remains myopic."

II. SUMMARY OF RESTRUCTURING MEASURES

A. Introduction

23. The main objective of the restructuring exercise is to consolidate and streamline the activities of the Organization into well-defined functional categories aimed at ensuring effective implementation of mandates entrusted to the Secretariat by the policy-making organs. During the first phase of the reform, initiated in February 1992, a number of offices were regrouped, related functions and activities consolidated and redeployments of resources undertaken. As a result, unnecessary bureaucratic layers have been reduced and certain peripheral activities eliminated. Lines of responsibility have been more clearly defined by concentrating the decision-making process in key departments at Headquarters (see A/47/88/Add.1). More specifically, the following structural arrangements were put in place:

(a) A new Department of Political Affairs was created, incorporating the functions of the Department for Political and Security Council Affairs, the Centre Against Apartheid, the Office for Political and General Assembly Affairs, the Department for Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, and part of the Office for Research and Collection of Information. This new Department was put under the direction of two Under-Secretaries-General;

(b) A new Department of Peace-Keeping Operations was established, incorporating the former Office for Special Political Affairs, which included the Office of the Military Adviser;

(c) The Office for Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea was integrated into the Office of Legal Affairs;

(d) A new Department of Economic and Social Development was formed, which comprised the Office of the Director-General, the Department for International Economic and Social Affairs, the Department for Technical Cooperation and Development, the Centre on Transnational Corporations, and the Centre for Science and Technology for Development;

(e) A new Department of Humanitarian Affairs was established subsequent to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 46/182 on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations. The new Department absorbed the functions performed by the United Nations Disaster Relief Office, the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes and various offices and units dealing with emergencies and humanitarian assistance programmes;

(f) The Department of Conference Services became an Office, and was made part of the Department of Administration and Management.

24. As a result of the above organizational changes, the Secretary-General was able to propose a significant reduction in number of senior level posts (A/C.5/47/2, para. 6).

25. Together, the restructured and consolidated entities represented some 48.1 per cent of the total budget resources as approved by the General Assembly for 1992-1993.

26. In his statement to the General Assembly on 2 November 1992, at the opening of the debate on the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the Secretary-General spoke of the need to rebuild "a unity of purpose for the economic, social and environmental sectors of the Organization" and indicated his intention to initiate a second phase of restructuring focused on the economic and social sectors of the Organization as a whole. He stated that the core of his managerial strategy was to secure a more rational distribution of responsibilities between Headquarters and the United Nations centres at Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna, as well as among global, regional and field structures, to provide a clearer sense of purpose for each of the United Nations programmes and to sharpen the substantive focus of each of the centres.

27. Two broad principles governed the Secretary-General's approach to the distribution of responsibilities between Headquarters and other parts of the economic and social structures of the Organization. The first was that responsibility for each sector or set of issues within the purview of the United Nations should be assigned to a single unit or entity within the Secretariat to reduce and eliminate duplication. The second related requirement was that the provision of substantive support for central intergovernmental bodies should be regarded as a priority activity for all economic, social and environmental entities of the United Nations in their respective sectors. Conversely, Headquarters capacities on cross-sectoral issues should be placed at the disposal, and help to orient the deliberations, not only of the central intergovernmental organs, but also of the governing and other intergovernmental bodies in each of the entities away from Headquarters.

28. On the basis of these approaches and in light of the advice of a high-level panel, the Secretary-General proceeded to establish three new departments at Headquarters and to redeploy activities among New York, Geneva, Rome and Vienna.

29. In the Secretary-General's view, as a result of these measures a better balance has been established at Headquarters, between Secretariat structures in the political, humanitarian, economic and social fields; services to central intergovernmental bodies will be improved; a greater capacity in terms of data and statistical support for national as well as international policy-making has been created; and support for technical cooperation will be enhanced.

30. In the following chapter (paras. 31-114), relevant changes in the structure and functioning of the intergovernmental machinery, as well as restructuring measures within the Secretariat affecting socio-economic issues, political matters, peace-keeping, peacemaking, humanitarian affairs, human rights, public information and administration and management are described in greater detail. These measures, together with those presented in the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995 now before the Assembly, should be considered as an integral part of the Secretary-General's ongoing effort to reform the Organization.

B. Restructuring of the economic and social sectors

1. Intergovernmental machinery

31. The overall objectives of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields are defined in General Assembly resolution 45/177 of 19 December 1990, taking into account the thrust of resolutions 32/197, 41/213 and other relevant resolutions of the Assembly.

32. By paragraph 5 (d) (i) of the annex to its resolution 45/264 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related field, the Assembly decided that a high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in accordance with Article 69 of the Charter and with ministerial participation, should be devoted to "the consideration of one or more major economic and/or social policy themes to be determined at the organizational session, taking into account the Economic and Social Council multi-year work programme". It was also stated that the main features of the deliberations of the high-level segment would be presented to the Council by its President in the form of a summary, which would be incorporated in its final report. 2/ By paragraph 5 (d) (ii) of the same resolution, the General Assembly established a coordination segment dealing with policies and activities of the specialized agencies, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by its paragraph 5 (d) (iii) the General Assembly decided to establish an operational segment focusing, in particular, on the follow-up of policy recommendations and decisions of the General Assembly and coordination of operational activities on a system-wide basis.

33. In paragraph 6 (3) of the annex to its resolution 45/264, the General Assembly mandated "a review at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly". In accordance with that resolution, the Assembly reviewed this question at its forty-sixth session and adopted resolution 46/235, in the context of which it requested the Secretary-General to implement restructuring measures concerning subsidiary bodies identified for restructuring and revitalization and to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

34. The Assembly, also in its resolution 46/235, inter alia decided to discontinue the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (both subsidiary bodies of the Assembly) and to recommend that the Economic and Social Council discontinue the Committee on Natural Resources (a subsidiary body of the Council). It also mandated the establishment of new expert bodies in the fields of natural resources, renewable sources of energy and energy for development, and science and technology. Subsequently, by its decision 1992/218, the Economic and Social Council formally established a Commission on Science and Technology for Development, a new Committee on Natural Resources and a Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development.

35. Taking into account the report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/CONF.150/26), the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/191, requested the Economic and Social Council to set up a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development as a functional commission of

the Council, inter alia, to examine the progress of the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, regional and international levels. The Commission held its first substantive session at Headquarters from 14 to 25 June 1993. At the same time, in the United Nations system, a new Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development was formed to ensure effective cooperation in the implementation and follow-up to the agreements reached at the Rio de Janeiro Conference.

36. Considering the importance of revitalization issues for the economic and social sector, the President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session decided on 27 October 1992, to establish an open-ended working group on agenda item 47 "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields". Consequently, at its resumed session (25 June 1993), the General Assembly considered two draft resolutions on the above subject (A/47/L.58 and A/47/L.60). These draft resolutions aimed at strengthening the Council in its functions and in its authority for system-wide coordination; rationalization of work among the General Assembly, the Council and their subsidiary bodies; and rationalization and harmonization of the agendas of the General Assembly and the Council. As a result of further debate, the adoption of these resolutions was postponed.

37. The Secretary-General in his statement before the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council (1993), stated that "... the process of re-thinking, of coordination, and of re-casting our institutions must start here. The Council should be providing leadership on economic and social policy for the United Nations. It should also guide the overall management of operational activities. This is a twofold process. Lines of communication between the General Assembly and the Council must be clarified and streamlined. The relationship between the Council and its subsidiary bodies also needs to be redefined. These are key issues for the future work of the United Nations in the economic and social field. Unless we make headway in these areas, the new clarity of focus which the United Nations system so desperately needs will elude us."

38. In a letter to the President of the General Assembly (28 July 1993) the President of the Economic and Social Council stated that "it is essential that the necessary measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the Economic and Social Council be adopted expeditiously in order to enhance further the capacity of the Council to undertake the responsibilities envisaged for it in the Charter of the United Nations. This view was constantly and widely expressed during the current session of the Council by delegations of all regional groups, and United Nations officials throughout the high-level, coordination and operational segments. Therefore, the Bureau wishes to convey to you that there is a widespread feeling shared among the member States of the Council on the urgent need to come to an agreement on this matter before the closure of the current session of the Assembly."

2. Economic and social departments at Headquarters

39. In the course of the first phase of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors, several departments and offices were merged into a new Department for Economic and Social Development. This served to create new

synergies among the three pillars of Headquarters work: system-wide coordination and policy guidance, research, analysis and studies on important global economic and social issues, and technical cooperation activities in developing countries, thus preparing the ground for the second phase encompassing all of the economic and social sectors of the Organization.

40. In light of the experience with this phase of restructuring and the recommendations of a High-Level Panel of Advisers, the Secretary-General in a report to the General Assembly (A/47/753), outlined the further reforms that he intended to introduce in the economic and social areas. These involved a redistribution of functions and activities between New York, Geneva (particularly the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), Rome (the World Food Programme (WFP)) and Vienna and the establishment of three new departments at Headquarters, focusing respectively on policy coordination and sustainable development; economic and social information and policy analysis; development support; and management services. A summary of the functions of these departments appears below (for more detail see the programme budget for 1994-1995).

(a) Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development

41. The central focus of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development is to provide support for the central coordinating and policy-making functions vested in the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly's Second and Third Committees. The Department is entrusted with a broad set of functions related to policy development, coordination and promotion of an integrated approach to United Nations activities arising from new long-term mandates in such areas as the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and implementation of Agenda 21, preparations for the World Summit for Social Development and other international conferences, and coordination of an Agenda for Development. The incorporation of the relevant functions and activities of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Council Secretariat into this Department, should enhance United Nations capacity for coherent policy development and provide more effective and better coordinated substantive support to central intergovernmental bodies. It is expected that these measures will help to promote a better integrated approach to development.

42. The promotion of a global partnership for sustainable development requires not only the strengthening of cooperation among Governments, but also between Governments and intergovernmental organizations both within and outside the United Nations system, as well as with the business and scientific communities and non-governmental organizations. One of the major tasks of the Department is to develop and promote cooperation with non-governmental organizations and other groups with a view to enhancing their contributions to the efforts of the international community in the economic, social and environmental fields.

(b) Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis

43. The Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis acts as a focal point for economic and social analysis and information in respect of population and statistics and provides substantive support to the pertinent intergovernmental machinery, including the Statistical and Population

Commissions. These functions include research and policy analysis and the execution of technical cooperation activities in the areas of statistics and population. In addition, the Department monitors and assesses, from a global perspective, economic and social policies and trends encompassing analysis of efficient macroeconomic management and relevant microeconomic issues. The elaboration of projections and the identification of new and emerging issues requiring attention by the international community also falls under the purview of this Department.

44. The Department serves as the lead unit in economic and social information within the United Nations and provides technical support to all other entities of the Organization. In this respect it cooperates closely with the Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant agencies and will link its activities with the early warning capabilities being developed in the political and humanitarian sectors of the Organization. Since its creation in February 1993, the Department has concentrated on the development and implementation of a new system of national accounts and on statistics concerning the environment. It has also provided substantive input to the preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, which will be held in 1994.

(c) Department of Development Support and Management Services

45. The Department of Development Support and Management Services has been given a twofold mandate. It acts as an executing agency for programmes and projects relating to institution-building and human resource development in selected cross-sectoral areas, such as development planning, policies and infrastructures, natural resources and energy planning, governance and public management, financial management and accounting. In this context, the Department supports capacity-building in the public and private sectors with particular emphasis on activities relating to sustainable development (Agenda 21) and ensures that attention is devoted to the particular requirements of the least developed countries and economies in transition, in accordance with established mandates. It also acts as a focal point at Headquarters for the provision of management services and implementation functions for technical cooperation.

46. In establishing this Department, the main objectives were to respond to prevailing needs, to sharpen the focus, and to enhance the impact of United Nations technical assistance in meeting the priority requirements of the developing countries, including countries in transition. With the envisioned incorporation of the Office of Project Services within the new Department (see General Assembly resolution 47/212 B) as a semi-autonomous entity, administrative efficiencies in managing technical assistance activities are expected to be realized and previous duplications eliminated. The modalities of the above merger have been described in the revised estimates (A/C.5/47/88), and the Secretary-General's note to the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (DP/1993/70). They will be the subject of a further report to the General Assembly in the context of the 1994-1995 proposed programme budget.

47. It is expected that the redistribution of functions in the socio-economic area among three departments will lead to a clearer division of responsibilities and labour and thus to greater effectiveness in programme delivery.

48. At present, the necessary staff redeployments have been nearly completed and the new Departments at Headquarters are becoming fully operational.

49. Special attention is currently being given to two closely related requirements. The first concerns the establishment of effective coordination mechanisms among the three Departments and with other United Nations entities in the economic and social areas. The second relates to the needs to gear the three Departments to providing the Secretary-General with the information and support he requires in the exercise of his responsibilities for policy direction and overall management of the economic and social sectors of the Organization. As part of these arrangements, mechanisms to monitor programme development and implementation so as to avoid duplication and ensure policy coordination at both global and regional level are being strengthened.

3. Regional commissions

50. In the annex to its resolution 46/235, the General Assembly, inter alia, determined that the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and that their effectiveness should be strengthened. In this context, the regional commissions were requested to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. The recommendations of the regional commissions on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 46/235 were presented by the Secretary-General in the context of his report on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session (see A/47/534, para. 25).

51. In the context of restructuring, the need to strengthen the role and functions of the regional commissions and their complementarity to global programmes was addressed. In so doing, the Assembly took into account their proximity to member Governments and their consequent comparative advantages in such areas as information gathering, monitoring economic developments, and promoting technical cooperation.

52. The high-level Panel of Experts supported the emphasis given by the Secretary-General to decentralization as a means of bringing the United Nations closer to the Member States and, in this connection, it called for greater recognition of the important contribution that the regional commissions can make by strengthening their functions and increasing their responsibilities. In this regard, the Secretary-General is concerned to ensure that there is effective coordination of the global and regional aspects of the programme and that increased decentralization is accompanied by greater accountability.

53. As reported by the Secretary-General in the revised estimates (A/C.5/47/88), an interdepartmental task force was established at Headquarters with the participation of the Heads of the regional commissions to review possible measures to strengthen commissions' functions, in particular through redeployment of resources and decentralization of programme activities. As a result, the share of the resources under the regular programme of technical cooperation (financed by the regular budget) earmarked for activities undertaken by the regional commissions would increase from approximately 40 to 60 per cent

during the next biennium. The relevant proposals appear in the programme budget proposals for 1994-1995.

54. Proposed decentralization measures in various programme areas, particularly in the field of natural resources and energy, will be the subject of a separate submission to the General Assembly.

4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

55. In order to enable UNCTAD effectively to address the new challenges and opportunities for international cooperation for development, and as a contribution to the process of restructuring of the economic and social sectors launched by the General Assembly, the eighth session of UNCTAD (held at Cartagena in February 1992) agreed on a number of far-reaching institutional reform measures. These entailed the redefinition of the functions of the Conference, the adaptation and reorientation of its substantive work, the overhaul of its intergovernmental machinery, new arrangements for the review of technical cooperation activities and the upgrading of its methods of work.

56. In his revised estimate dealing with the second phase of the restructuring, the Secretary-General, in paragraphs 48 to 57 of the revised estimates, underlined the close interrelationships that have emerged over the past several years among major issues in the areas of trade, finance, investment, technology and services. He also took into account the position taken by UNCTAD at its eighth session and the General Assembly in its resolution 47/183 that UNCTAD is the most appropriate focal point within the United Nations proper for the integrated treatment of these issues. He concluded that the current dispersion of different aspects of United Nations activities in the closely interrelated areas of trade, finance, investment and technology throughout the Secretariat inevitably diluted the impact of these activities. The consolidation of these activities in UNCTAD should eliminate these overlaps and create a broader base for enhancing the quality of substantive support provided to the Centre on Transnational Corporations and on the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as well as the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board and its concerned subsidiary bodies. The Secretary-General accordingly decided that the programmes relating to transnational corporations and to science and technology for development should be integrated within UNCTAD. This decision was the subject of paragraph 4 (c) of section III of General Assembly resolution 47/212 B.

57. The consolidation of these activities within UNCTAD is expected to eliminate the previously existing overlap among the concerned organizational entities concerned and to create a broader base for enhancing the quality of substantive support to the above-mentioned intergovernmental bodies. In addition to the synergies mentioned above, economies of scale are expected.

5. United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

58. The conclusions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development marked a new point of departure for the rationale and activities of

UNEP and Habitat. The Conference provided a philosophical framework supplemented by a programme of action outlined in Agenda 21. While reaffirming the role of UNEP as the principal body in the United Nations system in the field of environment, Agenda 21 provided a list of 14 priorities that UNEP needed to address. In responding to the decisions of the Conference, the Governing Council of UNEP adopted in May 1993 a clear set of priorities for UNEP's work programme for 1994/1995.

59. Habitat also participated fully in the preparatory process of the Conference that led to chapter 7 of Agenda 21 on "Promoting sustainable human settlement development". Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/180, the Secretary-General was requested to "establish through redeployment, to the maximum possible and within existing resources, an ad hoc Secretariat for the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, which shall be organizationally part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements".

60. To create synergies between the two programmes and to address the relevant issues more efficiently, the Secretary-General placed both organizational entities under common direction. In light of a further submission by the Secretary-General, the General Assembly is to revert to this matter at its forty-eighth session.

61. Concerning UNEP's internal management priorities, a number of initiatives have either commenced or are in the planning stages. The objectives of these measures are to develop further the competence of UNEP staff through clear and transparent human resource management; to develop and implement a better information system to support efficient management; to improve the management skills and conditions of the Secretariat with the aim of decentralizing authority by empowering and assigning accountability to staff and to enhance the coordinating and catalytic role of UNEP in the United Nations system through a more collaborative and cooperative approach at the programming and policy levels.

62. Placing both organizations (UNEP and Habitat) under common direction has led to a reassessment of the administrative framework of the United Nations Office at Nairobi. It is expected that the three administrative units for UNEP, Habitat and the Common Services of the United Nations Office at Nairobi will be streamlined into one organizational entity.

6. United Nations International Drug Control Programme

63. At its forty-fifth session, the General Assembly "took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the enhancement of the efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control and the report attached thereto of a Group of Experts; welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General to unify the United Nations structure for drug abuse control and requested the Secretary-General to create a single drug control programme, to be called the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and to integrate fully therein the structures of the Division of Narcotics Drugs, the Secretariat of the International Narcotic Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control" (see Assembly resolutions 45/147, 45/148, 45/149 and 45/179).

64. Pursuant to the above resolutions, the Secretary-General decided to establish a United Nations International Drug Control Programme in Vienna as a single body responsible for concerted international action for drug abuse control. The Programme integrates all entities that dealt previously with drug matters so as to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations structure for drug abuse control, while preserving the functions and mandates of the United Nations in this field. The Executive Director of the Programme acts on behalf of the Secretary-General in fulfilling the responsibility that devolves upon the Secretary-General under the terms of international treaties and resolutions of United Nations organs relating to international drug control. In February 1992, the Secretary-General decided that the Executive Director of the United Nations Drug Control Programme would also assume the functions of Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna.

C. Restructuring of the political, peace-keeping and humanitarian sectors

65. The restructuring of the Secretariat in the areas pertaining to political matters, peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, human rights, research and analysis, early warning and humanitarian issues was initiated during the first phase of the reform. The central features of the structural changes are:

1. Department of Political Affairs

66. In March 1992, the Secretary-General established the Department for Political Affairs in order to develop an enhanced capacity for good offices, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking; to collect and analyse information so as to be able to alert the relevant organs about impending crises; and to carry out mandates decided upon by the General Assembly, the Security Council and other competent organs.

67. The new Department for Political Affairs is headed by two Under-Secretaries-General with geographically defined responsibilities and functions. It incorporates five former offices and units dealing with political affairs and the substantive servicing of a number of United Nations organs and subsidiary bodies (para. 23 (a) above).

68. The decision to create this Department must be seen in the light of the statement by the Security Council adopted at a meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government on 31 January 1992 (S/23500). By this statement, the Secretary-General was invited to report, inter alia, on ways of strengthening and making more efficient, within the framework and provisions of the Charter, the capacity of the United Nations for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping.

69. In March 1993, the Secretary-General instructed that steps be taken to sharpen the focus of the Department in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. This decision reflected the approach to the maintenance of international peace and security which he had outlined in An Agenda for Peace (A/47/277-S/24111), as well as the decisions adopted thereon by the principal

organs of the United Nations, notably General Assembly resolution 47/120 and a series of Presidential statements by the Security Council (S/24728, S/24872, S/25036, S/25184 and S/25344).

70. During the second phase of restructuring, the Secretary-General proposed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, responsible for the substantive servicing of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, as well as its Legal Subcommittee, be transferred from New York to Vienna. The Office of Outer Space Affairs has a multisectoral programme with legal, political, technological and technical assistance components, elements of which are related to many of the entities currently in Vienna. Its transfer from the Department of Political Affairs will permit the Department to focus on its central mandates of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. The General Assembly approved the proposal on 6 May 1993 by its resolution 47/212 B.

71. The consolidation of all political activities into a single Department has provided for political oversight of peacemaking and peace-keeping operations. It has ensured the coherence and harmonization of the political directives issued to the various missions in the field. It has also created better conditions for the monitoring and comprehensive analysis of political developments in the field, thereby facilitating the preparation of the related reports to the Security Council and the General Assembly.

72. The restructuring of the Department of Political Affairs has also enhanced its capacity to provide efficient secretariat services to the Security Council and the General Assembly, as well as to their subsidiary bodies, in particular to the Sanctions Committees established by the Security Council. Further, the pooling and shifting of resources that this restructuring has generated has made it possible to create new units, through redeployment of staff, to meet new priority mandates of the Organization. Prominent among the new priority mandates are strengthening of regional cooperation in the context of An Agenda for Peace, and the provision of electoral assistance to facilitate the democratization process and to promote conflict resolution and peacemaking efforts.

2. Department of Peace-keeping Operations

73. Incorporating the responsibilities of the former Office of Special Political Affairs, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations was created during the first phase of restructuring on 1 March 1992.

74. In December 1991, United Nations peace-keeping missions comprised approximately 11,000 troops and some 4,000 civilian personnel, with a combined budget of $570 million. At present, nearly 80,000 military and some 12,000 civilian personnel serve in missions whose annualized budgets approach $3 billion. The growth in the number, scale and complexity of peace-keeping operations has continued unabated. In the past year alone, peace-keeping operations have seen a sixfold increase in troops and costs. In addition, these operations have also undergone notable conceptual and practical changes in response to the many new threats to international peace and security. The role of the United Nations in peace-keeping operations has increasingly moved beyond

its traditional functions of monitoring, observing and supervising cease-fires. Often, military components monitor disarmament, demobilization and reduction of armed forces. Other components are responsible for political development and reconciliation, including reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life. They also contribute to institution building, including administrative, judicial and police bodies. United Nations observer missions monitor elections or referendums, human rights, humanitarian aid and relief or economic reconstruction and development.

75. Since the Department's inception, several major operations, have either undergone significant changes or remain in an acute phase. For example, UNOSOM II in Somalia and UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia have been given enforcement authority under Chapter VII of the Charter. Due to the factors outlined in this paragraph and the preceding one, a need has arisen for improving Headquarters' capacity to supervise and direct such complex missions. These requirements have been recognized by the Security Council (see the statement by the President of 29 October 1992, S/24728), by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/71 and at an extraordinary session in August 1993 by the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. Taking into account the growth in the number, size and scope of missions, the Secretary-General has decided to strengthen the Department of Peace-keeping Operations in a comprehensive manner, both in terms of personnel and financial resources. In view of close linkages between the Department and the Field Operations Division, effective 1 September 1993, the latter has been separated from the Department for Administration and Management and integrated into the Department for Peace-keeping Operations. It is hoped that with this and other steps, increasingly numerous and complex operations, which have placed a severe strain on the Organization, will be managed more effectively.

3. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

76. In view of the rapid evolution in the nature, magnitude and frequency of both natural and man-made emergency situations in which the United Nations is called upon to assist, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 entitled "Strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations". The establishment of the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the appointment of an Emergency Relief Coordinator were steps towards the multifaceted concept of peace, security and economic well-being of the global community.

77. This Department incorporated part or all of the functions performed by the United Nations Disaster Relief Office, the Unit for Special Emergency Programmes, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs in South-East Asia, the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction Assistance for Lebanon, the Office for Research and Collection of Information, the Special Emergency Programme Units of the Department of Special Political Questions, Regional Cooperation, Decolonization and Trusteeship and the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation. In addition, as of 1 March 1993, responsibilities related to the Chernobyl programme were also assigned to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

78. In Geneva, the structure of the former Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator was subsumed into the Geneva Office of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs. A Complex Emergencies Branch and an Inter-Agency Support Unit were created and the previous units for humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the Secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, all financed from extrabudgetary resources, were brought into the ambit of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

79. The Department focuses on improving the delivery of humanitarian assistance to victims of disasters and other emergencies. It also acts as an advocate for humanitarian activities being considered by intergovernmental bodies, and plays a more active role in the vital early stages of an emergency by providing quick needs assessments, field situation analyses and early negotiations on access to emerging situations. In addition, United Nations humanitarian activities are expected to be further strengthened through improvements in the preparation of consolidated appeals and the operation of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund as an effective instrument for expediting the response of agencies to emergencies. Emphasis is also placed on ensuring a coordinated system-wide approach in coping with all humanitarian aspects of complex emergencies. The Department is also expected to ensure that the humanitarian dimension is fully integrated into peacemaking and peace-keeping activities.

80. As a result of the experience gained during 1992, it is evident that the creation of a unified structure has improved programme delivery. This has been the case particularly with respect to inter-agency assessments of humanitarian needs, consolidated United Nations appeals for humanitarian needs, tracking humanitarian contributions and provision of information on emergencies to United Nations agencies, donor Governments and non-governmental organizations. Programme delivery in respect of natural disasters has continued at approximately the same level. However, there have been improvements as a result of the elimination of the previous administrative separation of natural disasters from complex emergencies. It should be noted that the number of countries facing emergencies continues to increase and that the United Nations must have the necessary capacity to coordinate a timely and coherent system-wide response.

81. A separate report will be presented to the General Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, at its forty-eighth session.

4. Centre for Human Rights

82. With the exception of the pursuit of peace, there is no cause with which the United Nations is more closely identified than that of human rights. The Preamble to the Charter reaffirms the faith of the Peoples of the United Nations "in fundamental human rights ... in the equal rights of men and women ..." and proclaims their determination "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom". The Charter also entrusts specific responsibilities for human rights to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other organs and provides for the establishment of a commission on human rights. As the Secretary-General indicated in his report to the forty-seventh session of

the General Assembly on the work of the Organization, "The Charter of the United Nations places the promotion of human rights as one of our priority objectives along with promoting development and preserving international peace and security".

83. As the principal entity of the United Nations Secretariat dealing with the human rights issues, the Centre for Human Rights (previously called a Division) has endeavoured to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

84. Present international trends show that the world's nations are turning increasingly to the United Nations and to its human rights organs for peaceful and constructive solutions to human rights problems. As the role of the various organs in the human rights field becomes progressively operational, the Centre for Human Rights is evolving from an entity largely concerned with the servicing of deliberative bodies to a leading international instrument for the attainment of the Charter's purposes and principles.

85. In this context, the human rights programme is evolving from standard-setting activities to the implementation of the international standards of human rights. Its operational activities are moving towards creating the conditions necessary for the implementation process and for a universal culture of human rights.

86. Human rights activities have expanded greatly as a result of recent global events and a series of new mandates by legislative organs, principally the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the human rights expert bodies. The multidisciplinary nature of human rights issues and the interdependence of all the activities in this field have resulted in creating a complex web of United Nations bodies involved in human rights. Traditional human rights concepts are now viewed in close conjunction with peace and security and economic and social development. Democratic processes, the rights of children and women, of refugees and minorities are becoming more and more prominent subjects. Topics related to development and human rights are under consideration in the Commission on Human Rights and in the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, encompassing poverty, debt, structural adjustment policies and the right to development.

87. Following an internal review conducted in 1993 and taking into account the activities related to the implementation of international instruments and procedures, as well as the priority attached to the universal ratification and the broader monitoring of existing instruments, the Secretary-General decided to reinforce the organizational structure of the Centre by creating five separate and identifiable entities to deal with various programme activities. He also appointed, at the level of Assistant Secretary-General, a new head of the Centre for Human Rights who reports directly to him.

88. At its forty-seventh session, the General Assembly authorized additional resources to strengthen the Centre, and to enable it to carry out the new and expanded mandates entrusted to it by the Commission on Human Rights, including the situation of human rights in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. As a result, additional posts were temporarily redeployed from other programme

activities to the Centre. The Secretary-General's proposal for an increase in the resources of the Centre are reflected in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

89. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly is expected to undertake a thorough examination of the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Second World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993. The follow-up of the recommendations of the World Conference will undoubtedly have an important impact on the future direction of the United Nations human rights programme and the activities of the Centre.

D. Public information

90. As part of the ongoing reorganization of the Secretariat, the library information services (subprogramme 4 of programme 39 of the medium-term plan) and the publishing services (subprogramme 5 of programme 39) were transferred in 1993 from the Office of Conference Services to the Department of Public Information. Details of these activities are contained in the revised estimates (A/C.5/47/88). As reported in the note by the Secretary-General on the Joint Inspection Unit report "Towards an integrated library network of the United Nations system" (A/48/83), the Dag Hammarskjöld Library is in the process of implementing this recommendation of the JIU by creating a specialized branch library within Department of Political Affairs similar to the legal and statistical branch libraries that already exist. Efforts are also under way to create additional specialized branch libraries for other areas, e.g. economic and social development.

91. As a result of a further rationalization of its internal structure, the Department of Public Information is expected to concentrate more intensively on activities related to the Office of the Spokesman for the Secretary-General, the media and promoting external relations. The streamlining of the organizational structure of the Department of Public Information has resulted not only in savings, but also reinforced the capacity of the Department to deliver information programmes and services to which the Secretary-General and the General Assembly have accorded high priority.

92. The integration of 18 information centres with UNDP field offices has been undertaken in the context of the Secretary-General's efforts to facilitate inter-agency coordination in support of national action at the country level. The result of these efforts is to be evaluated at the end of a one-year trial period.

93. To enhance the performance of these offices, 59 of the 67 existing United Nations information centres have so far been equipped with computers. Action was initiated during 1993 to provide suitable equipment to the remaining centres without such facilities. The installation of an electronic mail system to nearly 210 locations, including peace-keeping missions, information centres and UNDP offices has also created a network that contributes to the increased effectiveness of these offices. Finally, the Department is continuing its efforts to establish a database with powerful search and data transfer capabilities, which, it is hoped, will serve as a global access point for other publicly accessible databases to be made available to Governments, the media,

United Nations Associations, non-governmental organizations and other institutions.

E. Administration and management

94. In a statement to the Fifth Committee on 6 November 1992 and in a note submitted to the General Assembly (A/47/753) at its forty-seventh session, the Secretary-General stressed the importance of introducing an integrated approach to all the interrelated managerial issues, coordinated by the Head of the Department of Administration and Management. It is in that context that in the course of the first phase of restructuring, the activities of the former Department of Conference Services were incorporated into the Department of Administration and Management, which now comprises four major offices: the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Finance, the Office of Human Resources Management, the Office of General Services and the Office of Conference Services.

95. In response to the challenges facing the Organization and in the light of the initiatives by the Secretary-General in reforming various organizational entities in the economic, social, political, peace-keeping and humanitarian sectors, the Department has established a new set of policy guidelines and procedures for an integrated administrative operation of the Secretariat. In addition, in order to maintain a sound administrative base and to solve complex administrative problems, the Department, through a number of internal reviews and task forces, provided managerial assistance and advice to several other organizational units of the Secretariat to buttress the efficient streamlining of their internal structures and functions and the application of new technologies. Issues of particular complexity, such as the integration of the Field Service Division into the Department for Peace-keeping Operations and the integration of the Office of Project Services into the Department for Development Support and Management Services have been the subject of a coordinated approach. Further improvements in the work of the Department are envisaged for the coming months.

96. In response to changes in the responsibilities and priorities of the Organization, the Office of Human Resources Management has reoriented its work. Furthermore, the streamlining of the recruitment and placement procedures for peace-keeping missions has helped expedite the staffing of missions. The growth in peace-keeping operations has also expanded the demand for medical assistance, for planning and overseeing medical evacuations and advising on compensation claims and disability benefits. Hence, the Medical and Employee Assistance Division has prioritized its activities and services.

97. Training is a key element not only in enhancing the efficiency of the Organization, but also in ensuring its ability to deliver programmes and fulfil mandates. A comprehensive management development programme, the long-term aim of which is to enhance leadership and managerial capacity within the Organization, has already been launched. Training programmes for operational activities in the field have also been expanded in order to prepare a cadre of staff ready to serve in a wide variety of mission assignments, as well as to train staff to serve more effectively in specific assignments in each mission

area. Finally, programmes are under way to bring staff skills to the levels required for the introduction of the Integrated Management Information System.

98. Efforts continue to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 47/93 of 16 December 1992. Greater priority is given to the recruitment and promotion of women in posts subject to geographic distribution, with particular reference to the goals set out in resolutions 45/125, 45/239 C and 46/100 which call for an overall participation rate by 1995 of 35 per cent and 25 per cent of posts at the D-1 level. A detailed report on the status of women in the Secretariat will be presented to the General Assembly at its present session.

99. The restructuring of the United Nations Office at Vienna was initiated during the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, which, by its resolution 45/248, subsequently requested the Secretary-General to propose a comprehensive restructuring of United Nations entities at Vienna with a view to enabling a speedy implementation of the wish of the General Assembly both to strengthen the United Nations Office at Vienna and to consolidate the United Nations drug structures under the authority of a single Under-Secretary-General (see para. 53). In the overall effort to optimize the utilization of the resources at the disposal of the Secretariat, UNOV's administration has engaged in inter-agency negotiations on common support services shared by the United Nations, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the Vienna International Centre. As one of the steps towards the establishment of a unified conference service at Vienna administered by the United Nations, IAEA agreed to incorporate its interpretation service into the joint United Nations/UNIDO interpretation service administered by UNOV beginning in January 1992, thus establishing a single interpretation service for all Vienna-based organizations, with greater flexibility and capacity and lower supervisory and administrative costs than those of the previous separate services. Negotiations between the United Nations and UNIDO are in progress concerning the transfer to the United Nations of responsibility for administering a joint language and documentation service during the 1994-1995 biennium; IAEA participation in this joint service would be welcome.

100. In accordance with recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for a strengthening of administrative and budgetary functions and structures of UNOV, it is proposed that as of 1994-1995, UNOV should take over the financial and general services functions for the United Nations previously performed by UNIDO as joint services on behalf of the United Nations. The establishment of separate services under UNOV is expected to yield cost reductions over the medium term and to improve efficiency.

F. Application of new technologies

101. The Integrated Management Information System will enhance the efficiency of the Organization by facilitating the control over financial and human resources, administrative procedures, inventory control and procurement by the Secretariat. Its application will promote consistency and accuracy in the processing of administrative actions and will result in more efficient, effective, better

informed and more consistent management decisions. The fifth progress report of the Secretary-General will provide further detail on the application of IMIS in the Secretariat and will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

102. Usage of the Computer Aided Design and Drafting (CADD), has facilitated the surging complexities of space management in the Secretariat. A new schedule of double-shift operations in buildings management is projected to save annual overtime costs by $200,000 and will bring about substantial productivity gains.

103. Despite an increase of 58 per cent in the workload of the mail operation and of 61 per cent in the pouch service, the Mail Operation Section was able to cut some 33 per cent of its staff between 1987 and 1992 as a result of introducing new technologies and methodologies.

104. Desktop computers are a key element in strengthening the Secretariat's ability to handle increasing workloads. With the installation of the Local Area Networks, access to common databases will be facilitated. Moreover, to provide comprehensive telecommunications support to peace-keeping missions, humanitarian assistance and field service operations, a link-up with a global satellite network is being developed.

105. By consolidating its sub-units into a unified 24-hour Control Centre and installing a sophisticated computer console, the Security and Safety Service has enhanced its operation.

106. The paper recycling programme is now being expanded to encompass aluminum cans and other metal products, glass and plastic bottles, corrugated cartons, newsprint, wood pallets and other wood products. Over the last four and a half years, some 5,000 tons of waste paper have been recycled.

107. The optical disk system is being completed with the acquisition of optical storage equipment, UNIX servers and software and retrieval work stations and networking components. The system is beginning to serve as a central repository for documents, official records and reference material by a wide range of users in the Secretariat and among permanent missions. Where direct access to the optical disk system is too costly or impractical, CD-ROM technology will be used to distribute the materials. Once the system is fully operational and made widely available, it is anticipated that it should generate greater efficiency and provide scope for savings in a number of areas, including storage space and printing costs.

108. The Documents Recording, Information and Tracking System (DRITS) now monitors and controls the preparation and production flow of the document. Locating, numbering and distributing documents are facilitated by a subsystem of DRITS, which assists in the scheduling of work requirements and in the control of documents awaiting distribution.

109. Specifications for translator work stations have been developed, encompassing word processing, electronic access to previously translated materials and dictionaries. Such a system could reduce research time, eliminate duplications of texts already translated and may also allow easier communication between the original author and the editors.

110. The Department of Public Information disseminates publications and major United Nations documents by electronic means to nearly 210 recipients: United Nations Information Centres, UNDP field offices, and peace-keeping and other political missions. In 1993, access to E-mail was extended to United Nations Interim Offices in Baku, Kiev, Minsk, Tashkent and Yerevan.

111. At the same time, the Department of Public Information is continuing to enhance the computer and communication capacities of the United Nations Information Centres. Currently, 59 Centres are computerized. A computerized mailing list programme for microcomputers was successfully tested in several centres.

112. In addition, the Department of Public Information is now establishing a database with powerful search and data transfer capacities that could serve as a global access point for publicly accessible databases, as well as Governments, media, United Nations associations, non-governmental organizations and other institutions - information retailers for the retrieval of information in real time. Installation of the UNIX Server will bring the Department to the technical platform compatible with similar databases and data transfer capacities of other United Nations agencies, thus enhancing their interaction in the field of information.

113. The Department is also finalizing the project for direct access to the optical disk system maintained by the Office of Conference Services for the on-line retrieval of United Nations documents and reference materials that will allow the Department to transmit these resources to United Nations offices world wide in a timely fashion.

G. Establishment of the Office for Inspections and Investigations

114. Effective 1 September 1993, the Secretary-General established the Office for Inspections and Investigations to provide a comprehensive internal audit service to the Organization and to ensure compliance with General Assembly resolutions, the United Nations rules and regulations and to investigate mismanagement and other practices with a view to preventing wastes, abuse and malfeasance. This Office is headed by an Assistant Secretary-General reporting directly to the Secretary-General. This appointment is the first step towards the establishment of a broader audit, inspection and investigation authority.

III. FURTHER REFORM

115. As the foregoing presentations demonstrate, the range of responsibilities facing the United Nations extends to virtually every conceivable area of human activity. The United Nations approaches the tasks of the next decade strengthened by an emerging agreement among its Members on its role and objectives, and by their readiness to entrust considerable responsibilities to the Organization.

116. To date, far-reaching administrative reforms have been implemented with the explicit aim of making the United Nations more efficient and effective.

Mechanisms for coordination within the United Nations and for system-wide activities are, moreover, continuously being adjusted in order to enhance their impact and effectiveness.

117. In the development field, the restructuring measures pursued by the Secretary-General during the past several months have encompassed all the economic and social sectors of the Organization. These measures were rooted in a basic concept of those functions that are best performed at Headquarters, those to be undertaken by other global United Nations programmes, and those that are more effectively carried out at the regional and field levels. They were aimed at eliminating duplication, redundancies and superstructures and at refocusing the work of each part of the Organization on its original, basic mandate. As such, the new Secretariat structures that have emerged from the reorganization were conceived to have a degree of permanency, while being sufficiently flexible to adapt to the shifting demands of the Member States.

118. This, of course, does not mean that the task of Secretariat reform in the economic and social area has been completed. While it is important that there should be a certain continuity in structures, the content and orientation of the programmes must continuously adapt to changing requirements and, profiting from experience, strive for greater impact.

119. The creation of new linkages and synergies should be the key components of further reforms in the future. These could be achieved by:

(a) Improved inter-agency linkages and coordination at the field level. This has been one of the priority objectives set for the system since the inception of the restructuring process. General Assembly resolution 47/199 has provided important policy guidelines in this respect. Much remains to be done to meet the challenges posed by that resolution;

(b) Improved linkages and mutual feedback between research and analysis on the one hand and operational activities on the other;

(c) Improved linkages among the global activities of the United Nations, the work of the sectoral agencies, and that of the Bretton Woods institutions. This has both policy and operational dimensions to which the restructured ACC machinery will be giving renewed attention in the months ahead; and

(d) New policy and programme linkages that effectively address the continuum from humanitarian assistance to rehabilitation and development.

120. During the coming period, high priority will continue to be given to the strengthening of the Organization's ability to deal with the increased demands for peacemaking, peace-keeping and related field operations through greater coordination within a unified and integrated structure, as well as the improved budgetary planning and enhanced management control, audit and programme evaluation. Ensuring the safety and security of staff in the field is a major related challenge.

121. In pursuing a more comprehensive approach to preventive diplomacy, the system has been developing a valuable network of early warning systems ranging from environmental threats, the risk of nuclear accidents and natural disasters

to mass movements of populations, the threat of famine and the spread of disease. A more systematic cooperative effort, however, is still required to pool and analyse this information and also to synthesize it with political indicators into a strong, system-wide early warning capability.

122. In the coming year, the reform process will be carried forward in a number of duty stations. In pursuing the decentralization process, a key concern will be not only a more effective Organization-wide distribution of responsibilities, but also improved coordination between functions performed at Headquarters and those carried out at the regional and country level.

123. As the Secretary-General stated earlier, "Improvement can have no limit, yet, there is an expectation, which I wish to see fulfilled, that the present phase in the renewal of this Organization should be completed by 1995, its fiftieth anniversary. The pace set must, therefore, be increased if the United Nations is to keep ahead of the acceleration of history that characterizes this age" (A/47/277).

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/47/1) and ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1 (A/48/1).

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/47/3).

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THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Letter dated 15 September 1993 from the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement made by His Excellency Mr. Fidel V. Ramos, President of the Republic of the Philippines, on the mutual recognition between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel and on the agreement on Palestinian limited autonomy in the Gaza strip and the West Bank town of Jericho (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 34 and 35 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Narcisa L. ESCALER
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/48/150 and Corr.1.

ANNEX

Statement made on 14 September 1993 by the President of the Philippines concerning the signing of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization Accord

The Philippines joins the international community in expressing its elation over the signing of the Israel-PLO Accord. This is a great development for two peoples with which the Philippines enjoys a deep friendship, the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. The Philippines has long viewed the differences between the two communities not as a choice between a right and a wrong cause, but rather, as two just causes in need of conciliation.

I salute the statesmen who made this historic event possible, the President of Palestine and PLO Chairman, Yasser Arafat, and the Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzak Rabin. Likewise, I congratulate the Governments of the United States of America and Norway for their key roles in helping to ensure enduring peace in the Middle East.

The Accord marks a vital breakthrough in the Middle East peace process. We hope that similar agreements between Israel and their neighbours will be concluded in the near future. In the United Nations and other international forums, the Philippines has always supported the legitimate aspiration of both the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. We enjoy fruitful bilateral relations with both Israel and Palestine.

This Accord is further evidence of a current global trend towards conciliation between formally adversarial entities. We, in the Philippines, are ourselves in the midst of a comprehensive peace process. We are confident that our own unification efforts will receive added impetus from the global trend, just now elevated to new heights by Israel and Palestine.